



## Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

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**Early Care and Education Work Group – February 18, 2005 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Jenny Adair, Donna Alliston, Dee Cox, Dana Gonzales, David Griffin, Deniece Honeycutt, Thelma Jasper, Kathy MacKay, Martha Reeder, Sandra Reifeiss, Vicki Shelby, Ratha Tracy, Jody Veit-Edrington, Cara Walloch, and Paula C. Watson.

**Regrets:** Deborah Blackburn, Deborah Gangluff, Jana Gifford, Joanna Grymes, Virginia Lancaster, Sue Martin, Jane Price, Kelly Smith, Kathy Stegall, Dan Sullivan, Victoria Stearns, and Nancy Walker.

### **Agenda Item #1: Reapplication Process – Goals**

**Discussion:** Martha explained the reapplication process and began her remarks by quoting Lynn Kagan, who wrote the position paper for Strengthening Families. Lynn asked the question: “Are we building a system or tweaking pieces of infrastructure. Eight minus one equals zero. If one piece is not working, there is no system.”

We need to take a look at where we are right now. We need a way to measure what we are doing. That is easier in some cases. We need to measure every tool. We have invested time, money, and energy in the development of tools. We need to know how effective are the tools.

There was a lot of discussion around the reapplication process. The goals were discussed one by one, and those persons who were present answered the three questions for each goal with known information. Additional clarification was given on the three questions as needed. Once the information is gathered, Martha will again compile.

**Result:** See goal sheets that are attached to these minutes.

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### Agenda Item #2 – Parent Education Certification/Credentialing

**Discussion:** Martha reported that the Parent Education group is looking at a opportunity for “Credentialing” people who work with children and their families. One of the programs comes out of Cornell University (New York). The closest one to us is located in Missouri, called the Missouri Family Development Training and Credentialing Program (FDC), sponsored by the Children’s Trust Fund. It has been approved for HI PPY and Head Start workers.

The FDC program is a “training program for frontline workers designed to reorient human service practice to the family support approach. It offers a research-based comprehensive curriculum in family support principles, which significantly improves the ability of frontline workers to help the families and individuals they work with to set and reach their own goals.”

After successful completion of 90 classroom hours of instruction, a standardized exam, and portfolio development under the guidance of a community based field advisor, workers receive a credential issued by the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) Family Studies Program.

The students that complete the course get seven hours of college credit by paying a small fee. Almost every university in Arkansas is part of that agreement.

Parent Education is looking at the possibility of introducing in Arkansas. There are two ways for the state to participate:

- (1) Stand-alone program
- (2) Enter into an Agreement with Missouri

If we choose to work with the Missouri program, they would be the managing coordinators. They would contract with a University in Arkansas to grant the credential. Kansas is already contracting with the Missouri program.

The program administrator of the Missouri program is Dr. Deborah K. Smith. She is a sociology professor in the Family Studies Department of UMKC. UMKC is the credentialing agent for the program in Missouri

**Result:** . Dr. Smith has agreed to come down and do a presentation Friday, April 22, or Friday, April 29. The date will be finalized at the steering committee retreat.

An open invitation will be extended to all the work groups to attend this meeting once the actual date has been determined.

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### Agenda Item #3: Web Site - Providers

**Discussion: The Family Support is considering a family support web site targeting Providers. This is in addition to ARMIS. There would be a link to ARMIS and include a calendar.**

### Agenda Item #4: Other Comments and Adjournment

Other work groups have been encouraged to latch on to one or two of the things in their plans that are "do-able" in the shortest amount of time, with funding that is already in place. This group was encouraged by Martha to look at what they could accomplish in the next few months. This group has been focused on tiered quality strategies.

Question posed: Should individuals be chosen or sub-groups be formed to work on particular goals? But, if working in sub-groups, there are some individuals committed to one thing without doing anything else. Recommendations from groups would be just that – a recommendation. These would then be presented to the entire group for consideration.

It was suggested that all aspects be part of any sub-group, including licensing. We need to determine what sub-groups are needed (examples: public relations group, tier group, transition group, etc.).

All actions of the group should take into consideration the matter of how their recommendations fit into the statewide system. Each action must be evaluated on the basis of whether results would really improve the system.

After the retreat, all the work groups are going to come together and look at the whole. This is not a competitive grant. We are fairly certain it will be continuous. We need to assess our present system, and determine which pieces of the system need help, as well as show what has been done to make it work better. We need to look at what groups said they were going to do, what they have done, and what they hope to do next. A concise document needs to be developed to inform all groups what we see as the system needs at this point and where we are in getting there.

The next large group will be to bring in all the AECCS group and the Strengthening Families group together to update everyone.

AETN is producing a program on child abuse and prevention that will include the five protective factors. This will be premiered at the AETN Conference in April. Then in May, there will be a Strengthening Families kickoff in Conway at the AETN studio with all the groups invited where the program will be shown again on the station with the live audience. Representatives from SFI will be present as well as other dignitaries. There will be an expert panel discussion, questions and answer period, a call-in for resources opportunity, etc. You will learn more about this later.